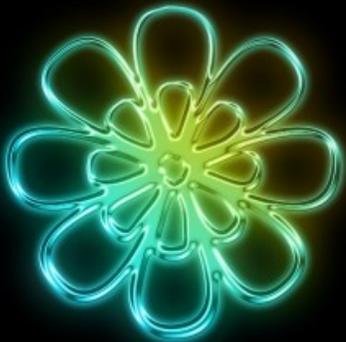




Clay Testing

With Deb Wood



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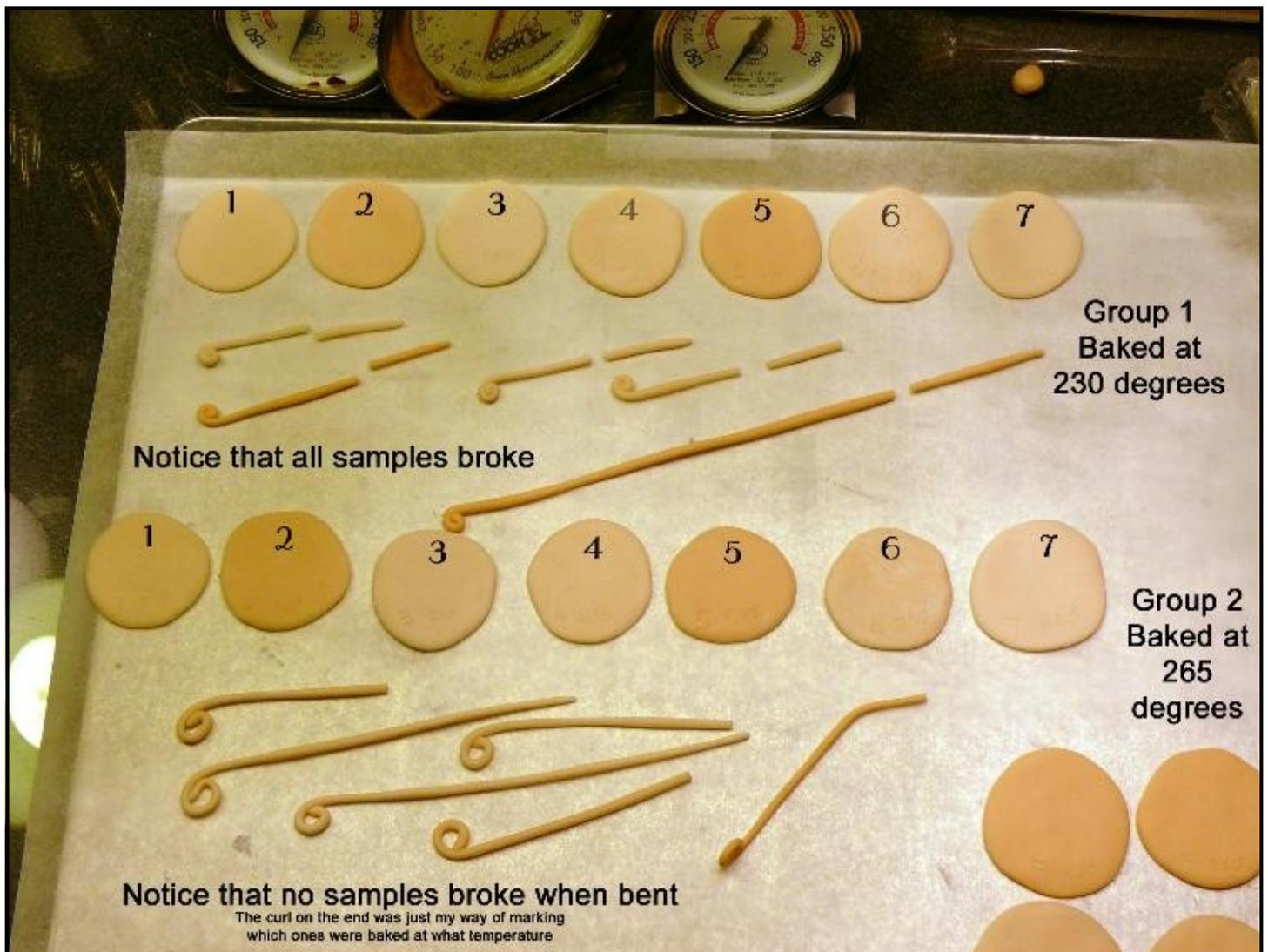
Bake Tests for Polymer Clay

Bake temperatures 230-265-275 F (110-130-135 C)

These tests were conducted using Fimo Classic #43 flesh pink, Rose Puppen Fimo, Porcelain Puppen Fimo, Natural Puppen Fimo, Premo in beige color, Kato beige flesh color, Prosculpt Regular, Prosculpt Baby (and some blends of these clays)

NOTE: Unfortunately, several of these clays are no longer available from the manufacturer, they have been replaced with other, new clays. These tests were done when the baking requirements for polymer were changed (lowered), to find out how the clays stood up in testing; comparing the different temperatures.

Below are the samples-and a list of each product used to match the numbers.
This list is on page 3.

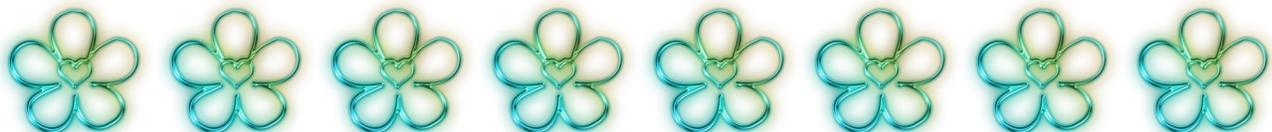


Samples of Groups 1 and 2, baked at 230 F and 265 F :

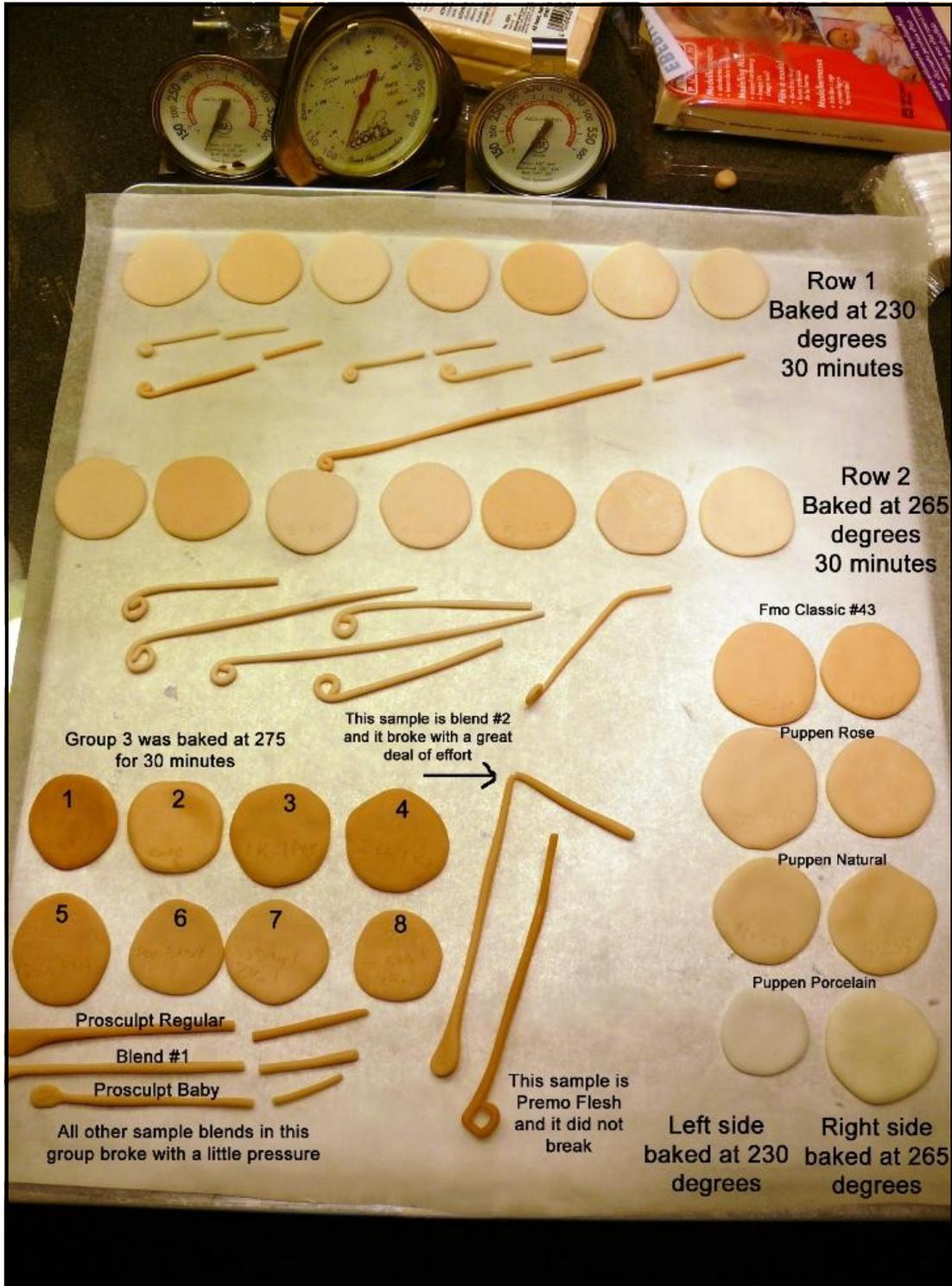
(Refer to the photo on page 2)

1. 2 parts Rose Puppen and 1 part Porcelain Puppen
The results were quite pale- and there were a few moonies in this sample
2. 2 parts Rose Puppen, 1 part Porcelain Puppen and 1 part Fimo Classic #43
This one was not quite as pale, there were a few moonies
3. 2 parts Rose Puppen, 1 part Porcelain Puppen and 1/3 of one part white Classic Fimo
The results of this blend are quite pale, more opaque than the others, a few moonies and an overall grayish tint to the sample.
4. 2 parts Rose Puppen, 1 part Porcelain Puppen, 1 part Fimo #43 flesh pink and 1/2 of one part white Classic Fimo. This sample was a little more 'pink' and there were no visible moonies.
5. 2 parts Rose Puppen, 1 part Natural Puppen and 1 part Fimo #43 flesh pink. This sample was more 'flesh' colored and there were a few moonies- 4 in the sample
6. 2 parts Rose Puppen, 1 part Natural Puppen, 1 part Fimo #43 flesh pink and 1/2 of one part white Classic Fimo. I liked this sample the best. The color is good, somewhat pale, but good color. There were no moonies in this sample. To have more translucency, perhaps try a bit less white.
7. 1 part Rose Puppen, 1 part Porcelain Puppen, 1 part Natural Puppen, 1 part Fimo #43 flesh pink and 1/2 of one part white Classic Fimo. This sample was lighter than #6 but still a nice color

All of these samples were a pleasing, pale flesh color, not 'tanned' like you see in some of the other brands of clay. While the photo may not support this, to my eye the colors are from lightest to darkest in this order, 3, 7, 1, 6, 4, 2, and with 5 being the darkest. There was not a noticeable difference in the colors of the clay in the individual samples, between the two temperatures. There were just a few more moonie marks in the 265 degree group. The biggest difference was in the strength, as mentioned below.



What is most interesting to me- and the most valuable part of this experiment, is to see the incredible difference in strength between the two groups of Puppen clays- baked at the two different temperatures. Clearly, the clay baked at 265 is stronger. This supports what I have been saying all along- that at 230 the product is just not as strong as it should or could be. I strongly urge you to use oven thermometers and do NOT EXCEED 265 while baking these clays- but you can be comfortable baking the newer packaged clays at 265 and get the benefit of the stronger clay in your sculpt.



(From page 4)

Group #3 Samples--all baked at 275 degrees

Premo Beige- very matte, quite a few swirl marks in the clay sample.

2) Kato Beige flesh- this clay gets a sheen to it when it is baked and is very strong.

3) 1part Kato Clay and 1 part Premo clay. Nice result- matte finish but not too much so. A couple marks in the clay but not too bad. Probably the most satisfactory results of this group.

4) 2 parts Premo and 1 part Kato. A little darker than sample 3 of this group and a few more marks or moonies in the clay.

5) Prosculpt regular. Very matte- and again, those swirl marks are visible in the clay like the Premo example.

6) Prosculpt Baby. Lighter than Prosculpt regular, very matte, very opaque and the swirl marks are not as noticeable.

7) **Blend #1**, 1 part Prosculpt Baby and 1 part Puppen Rose. Nice color, not as opaque as #6, a few very slight moonie marks.

8) **Blend #2**, 1 part Prosculpt regular and 1 part Puppen Rose. Again, not as dark, a nicer finish but there were noticeably more moonies in this sample.



In the strength test for this last group, you can see all samples broke except for **Premo Beige**. I thought I would try adding Puppen to the Prosculpt to see if it would strengthen it- it did, but not enough that I would trust it in my work. Also, Puppen is supposed to be baked at 230 or 265, depending on the package- so 275 is a bit hot for that clay. This is the problem we run into when blending clays from different manufacturers, the temps are usually different so we're never sure if the clay is correctly cured.



To be safe though, I baked these samples at the temps needed to meet the needs of the clay with the higher temperature requirements. With the addition of Puppen clay to the blends, the moonie problem was also worse in those samples.

Also, I did bake these samples in Group 3 for 30 minutes, instead of 15 minutes per 1/4", again, because of the requirements of the Puppen clay. Some of the samples may not have been as dark had the time in the oven been shorter.

Another look at those mo products close up- I realize the color isn't that good in this photo, but you can see there isn't that much color shift between the 230 bake temp and the 265 bake temp. The most change was noted in the Porcelain color. The greatest difference is in the strength as is shown in the first photo on this page. Just those few degrees made such a difference!

I hope this information is helpful and will aid you in making the right choices for your own clay use. I do believe the polymer clay industry will be going through many changes in the coming years and we will need to adjust if we want to continue to enjoy this fascinating medium. Do your own experiments to see what works best for YOU.

2016 Updated Information

Regarding the different brands of clay. Here are the new clays that are currently available to replace the clays used in these tests. Puppen Rose and Classic Fimo #43: Fimo Professional Cameo #435. Natural Puppen: Fimo Professional Beige #44. Puppen Porcelain: Fimo Professional Porcelain #03. Fimo Classic Dark Flesh: Fimo Professional Sand #45.

In general, these new Fimo Professional clays behave the same as the Puppen clays in the testing and are as strong as the Puppen clays were after baking. The Fimo Professional clays are a little harder to condition and are more 'dry', so adding Fimo Mix Quick will help moisten the clay. Adding one part MQ to 4 parts clay makes a nice blended clay that will be strong and flexible after baking.



Hope you enjoyed this tutorial! Hugs, Deb

